

Roll Call Number 35, H.R. 3231, the Federal Intern Protection Act of 2015. On both the measures my intent was to vote "yea" had I been present on the House floor.

RECOGNIZING MS. PATRICIA
SIMMONS

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 28, 2016

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Patricia Simmons, an inspiring educational leader from Pomona, New York, who passed away on December 27, 2015.

For the last 15 years, Ms. Simmons served with distinction, grace and total dedication to students as Principal of Fleetwood Elementary School in Chestnut Ridge, New York. She was an integral, respected and beloved part of the entire East Ramapo Central School District community, serving as President of the East Ramapo Building Administrators Association, a co-founder of the Rockland Association of Black School Educators and as a board member of the CEJES Institute, a local cultural, educational, and research foundation dedicated to improving educational and social conditions for all. Ms. Simmons also served on the Spring Valley NAACP Education Committee as a strong advocate for student, parent, and community engagement in local schools.

At Fleetwood, Ms. Simmons quietly and effectively instilled a sense of hope and respect in all her students and pride and confidence in the teachers and staff. During the winter, Ms. Simmons would stand at the entrance of the school to make sure every child was wearing a coat, gloves, and hat, providing for those who did not have their own. On Fridays, Ms. Simmons would pack food in students' backpacks to make sure they did not go hungry over the weekend. Ms. Simmons and her staff at Fleetwood Elementary would also supply gifts for children and deliver turkeys for Thanksgiving to families in need.

Ms. Simmons earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Black and Hispanic Studies from the State University of New York at Oneonta; a Master of Arts in Education, specializing in Infant and Toddler Educational Development and Reading Recovery at New York University; and a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision from Bank Street College. She began her career in Brooklyn as a classroom teacher and reading specialist, and later was appointed Assistant Principal at the Crispus Attucks School in Bedford Stuyvesant, until her appointment as Principal of Fleetwood Elementary. In her early years at Fleetwood Elementary, Ms. Simmons received the Excellence in Education Award in 2004 from The Parent and Student Advocacy Network in Rockland County. She was honored by the Epsilon Chi Chapter of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., as a "Bridge Builder" in 2009 for her dedication to ensuring a promising future for East Ramapo youth. She also was selected to receive the Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Award for Administrator of the Year in 2012.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the many outstanding accomplishments of my

constituent, Ms. Patricia Simmons, a true advocate for children. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring her exceptional life.

HONORING JOHN A. WICKS, JR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 28, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, John A. Wicks, Jr., who is a native of Jackson, Mississippi.

John A. Wicks, Jr. is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Wicks, Sr. of Jackson. He attended Jackson Public Schools and graduated from Murrah High School. He then matriculated at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi where he received a B.S. degree in Computer Science and Applied Mathematics and was the valedictorian of his graduating class. While at Alcorn, Brother Wicks was active in many organizations and served as president of both Alpha Kappa Mu honor society and the Alpha Zeta chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. Brother Wicks went on to obtain a M.S. degree in Electrical Engineering from North Carolina A & T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina and a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia where he also served as president of the Black Graduate Student Organization. He has taught Computer Engineering at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama and Computer Science at Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi.

In October 1977, Brother Wicks accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, uniting with New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, where he was active in the youth department. In May 1997, while working as an instructor at Tuskegee University, he acknowledged the call to preach the gospel. Subsequently, he attended the Montgomery Bible Institute in Montgomery, Alabama and served as an associate minister at Greater Peace Baptist Church in Opelika, Alabama. In August 1998, Brother Wicks began service as an associate minister at New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson. In August 2000, he accepted the call to serve as the interim pastor of Mount Nebo Baptist Church in Jackson. On January 18, 2001, Brother Wicks was elected to serve as Mount Nebo's sixth pastor and was installed on March 25th.

In addition to his pastoral duties at Mount Nebo, Brother Wicks has served on various community boards including the Mission Mississippi Resource Development Committee. He has also served as a writer for the Clarion-Ledger Faith Forum and is currently serving as the State Director of Education for the General Missionary Baptist State Convention of Mississippi, Inc., and the Senior Vice-Moderator of the Jackson District Missionary Baptist Association.

Brother Wicks has been the recipient of various awards and accolades including the Metro-Jackson chapter of the NAACP 2008 Medgar Evers Award winner, a Mississippi Gospel Music Awards 2011 Pastor of the Year honoree, and the 2011 Image Award Winner for Religion bestowed by Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. He is married to the former Felice

L. Dowd, a native of Marks, Mississippi, and they have three children, John Arthur III, Faith Alexandria and Grace Elizabeth. Finally, Brother Wicks' motto is traditional, tried and true: "To God be the glory for the many wonderful things He has done!"

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor John A. Wicks, Jr. for his dedication to serving others.

CONGRATULATING THE CHARLES
COUNTY CHAMBER OF COM-
MERCE ON ITS SIXTIETH ANNI-
VERSARY

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 28, 2016

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the Charles County Chamber of Commerce on the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary. Since its establishment in 1956, with Reed McDonagh as its first President, the Chamber has provided a boost to the local business community through educational seminars, public forums business development strategies, and a strong voice for the needs of its members. Working in partnership with the county government, the public school system, and local community leaders, the Chamber continues to contribute to the goal of ensuring that Charles County grows and remains a great place to do business.

With each passing decade, the Charles County Chamber of Commerce has taken creative steps to fulfill its mission to support its members and advance the county as a leader for economic growth and private sector job creation in Southern Maryland through its effective advocacy, high level networking and timely communications.

The Chamber has always dedicated itself to the mission of making Charles County a great place to invest, work, and grow a business. In its first years the Chamber gave rise to the Committee of 100, which later became the county's Economic Development Commission. In the 1970's, it established the Annual Trade Show to introduce local businesses, large and small, to county residents and to promote available services. In the decade that followed, it launched a scholarship program in memory of U.S. Navy Seabee diver, Robert D. Stethem, a Charles County resident and an early victim of the War on Terrorism, an example of the many ways it has worked to strengthen the local community over the years.

The Chamber created a memorial "Business of the Year" Award honoring Reed McDonagh in the 1990's to recognize a business that provides exceptional leadership in advancing the mission of the Chamber and its core principles. Around that time as well, the Chamber played a vital role in advocating for the importance of the Naval Surface Warfare Center. Indian Head Division, during the BRAC Commission process, in which I was proud to help lead the fight to keep these installations open and an integral part of Southern Maryland's culture and economy.

In recent years, the Chamber has played a critical role in working with federal, state, and local officials to help businesses and families get back on their feet after a devastating tornado, bringing a minor league team to the